

**Town of Westport
Golf Advisory Committee**

Minutes

The Golf Advisory Committee of the Town of Westport met in Town Hall in Room #201 on Monday, April 1, 2013. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Fred Hunter, at 7:30 PM.

Members present: Fred Hunter, Mark Holod, Jean Murdoch, Joanna Nicholson, Gary Solomon, and Scott Smith.

Others Present:

Stuart McCarthy, Jim Marpe, Dave Levin, Sean Doyle, Dick Siderowf, Dave Eason, Patty Kondub, Jim Izzo, Dick Healy, Charles Kelly, Michael Fox, Linda Clair

The Agenda was reordered so that Stuart McCarthy could attend another meeting.

1. Discussion – Outsource Maintenance RFP

The plan was begun 18 months ago. 4 or 5 companies were interviewed. NO action was taken. However, after the condition of the course last summer, the idea was resurrected.

Fred Hunter visited area courses that are using OSM, finding that we are not alone in looking into this.

Stuart McCarthy has developed an RFP for Outsourced Maintenance (OSM) that will go out next week for reactions. It will go out for bid at the end of April. It is not definite that OSM will be adopted. There need to be multiple quality vendors from which to choose. If only one vendor responds to our RFP, it is not advisable to go forward.

Other considerations include quality of service and staff, including the superintendent, mechanic, agronomist; cost of providing that service, short term and long term; and resources that the contractor can bring to bear on our golf course. Extensive references will be available, including any contract they have had in the last 7 years. Generally agreements are for three years.

Vendors may consider hiring our staff but are not required to do so, but town costs such as employee benefits, workers comp, etc. will no longer be the town's responsibility. Existing labor agreements prevent us from unilaterally abandoning those agreements. If the RFP is viable, we can begin discussion with those unions.

Stuart went on to say that OSM does have some release of control. We can't bring them in and expect to tell them how to do their job. They don't work for us.

They work under contract. Parameters outline regular meetings and reporting, but we would not be hiring the superintendent and mechanic. However, we may have veto power. They would have weekly meetings with Stuart, and he would have access to the superintendent. Communication is the single issue for them. They want the next contract.

January, 2014 season is the start date for the OSM, if we decide to do it. Expect proposals in June 2013.

When asked if the OSM would be transparent to golfers, Stuart replied that the OSM staff will wear employee uniforms; there will be a new superintendent who will be the face of the operation; there will be improvement of the golf course, and employees will be in and around the golf course throughout the day.

Questions from the audience and Stuart and Fred Hunter's responses follow:

Dave Eason, Mayflower Parkway: Any thought of just replacing the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent? Stuart responded that resources from OSM are more important. OSM is a way to get out from under long term costs. Fred responded that we can evaluate the current staff over the next year to see if there are viable options.

Dave Levin: Will the public be able to review the RFP? Answer: Yes, It will be posted.

Sean Doyle: How many vendors will the RFP go to? Answer: 7 or 8, but it will also be publicly advertised.

Charles Kelly, Otter Trail: Will the OSM have control over closing the course? Answer: Yes, but when and why will be spelled out.

Michael Fox: Will living arrangements on the course be provided? Answer: There is no reference to housing in the RFP.

Parry Kondub: Does the current superintendent get housing on the golf course? Answer: Yes.

Dick Healy: Are geese part of the RFP? Answer: Not at present, but that matter can be discussed. Also, will set up for tournaments be easy or difficult for the OSM? Answer: Fred said he does not see this as a problem.

Dave Eason: What incentive does Dan Rackliffe have to improve the course from last year? Answer: Dan is a professional. (Scott Smith) Fred answered that the process is not a foregone conclusion. The incentive is to make the golf course the best it can be.

Patty Kondub: What about the geese droppings? Fred answered: They are not fully staffed yet to clean up.

2. Discussion – GAC Benchmark report

Will go to the P&R Commission on April 22. It went to Stuart McCarthy today. Basically it will show the Town's lack of support of the golf course and make recommendations. It began as a process to challenge the Town to maintain the golf course. It shows that Longshore is not competitive in the marketplace.

Jimmy Izzo: How many pass holders were there? Answer: Down 20%.

Sean Doyle: Commended the work of the Benchmarking. He added that we not forget "the golf experience."

Dick Healy: Commended the Benchmark study. He asked: In 2013 what confidence do you have that the golf course can be brought back? He also asked if there is a better process for using the dog. Fred answered: They will do what they can. Dan has not been told "no" on any request for money in the last 6 months.

Dick Healy also said that the GAC represents the golf community and must keep the heat on Joseloff on down. Gary Solomon said that the public must be the hammer, not the GAC. Fred responded that Joseloff is behind the OSM process.

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of February 14, 2013 were approved as submitted.

4. 2013-2014 Final Golf Budget

The golf budget is up .08% for next fiscal year.

5. Rounds Report

In March 2012, we had 1,653 rounds. In March 2013, we had 0 rounds. Down 5%

6. Greens Committee Report

Greens Committee met March 24, 2013. Course will open April 6 except green #2. Dan said overall the course is recovering. specialized equipment is being used and sensors installed. Harvey is coming April 11th with bunker advice, to soften the faces. Tee boxes will be scraped and regraded in May. USGA will visit in May and give advice. Cart paths at 15 and 16 will be improved. Salt water damage may take 2 years to recover.

7. Old Business

- No increase in fees next year.
- Town working with John Cooper for town and John's web site to work out.
- AED not going to be provided on golf course.
- 9th tee will have a sign for Cliff's Place
- 16th tee improvements have begun.

8. New Business

Stuart is working on a P&R Newsletter once every one or two weeks.
Tree donation process may be set up.
Golf Ball outing is being discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Nicholson
GAC Secretary